

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims are set forth below. Cancelled and withdrawn claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (previously amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously added), (reinstated - formerly claim #), (previously reinstated), (re-presented - formerly dependent claim #) or, (previously re-presented).

Please AMEND the claims in accordance with the following:

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A message processing apparatus connected to a plurality of terminal apparatuses via a network, comprising:

a preparation unit, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of persons interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of persons who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, preparing a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers containing names of a plurality of receivers, each receiver having received an interpersonal message relating to a business activity, the receiver state list also containing individual states of each of the respective receivers, each individual state being mutually associated with the name of a corresponding receiver, where each individual state of each receiver indicates a status of that receiver's activity regarding the business activity for which the receiver is responsible, and where the indicating is based on responses received from the receivers in response to the interpersonal message; and

a message management unit enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message ~~relating to the business activity~~ and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the manager who is a sender of the interpersonal message and belonging to the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, and where for each receiver the displaying is responsive to the interpersonal message being selected from a received message list comprising interpersonal messages sent to and received by the receiver.

2. (PREVIOUSLY AMENDED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein,

the sender comprises a manager managing the business activity, the receivers comprise respective staff, the interpersonal message is a message inquiring about progress of the staff concerning the business activity, and the manager receives the response messages from the staff, where the responses include completion information indicating whether the business activity has been completed, and wherein

the preparation unit prepares the receiver state list containing, in the mutually associated manner, the names of the plurality of receivers and the states of each of the respective receivers to indicate, based on completion information in the responses, whether the business activity has been completed.

3. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A message processing apparatus connected to a plurality of terminal apparatuses via a network, comprising:

a preparation unit preparing a receiver state list containing names of a plurality of receivers, each receiver having received an interpersonal message relating to a business activity, the receiver state list also containing individual states of each of the respective receivers, each individual state being mutually associated with the name of a corresponding receiver, where each individual state of each receiver indicates a status of that receiver's activity regarding the business activity, and where the indicating is based on responses received from the receivers in response to the interpersonal message; and

a message management unit enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message relating to the business activity and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to a sender and the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, wherein

the sender comprises a manager managing the business activity, the receivers comprise respective staff, the interpersonal message is a message inquiring about progress of the staff concerning the business activity, and the manager receives the response messages from the staff, where the responses include completion information indicating whether the business activity has been completed, and wherein

the preparation unit prepares the receiver state list containing, in the mutually associated manner, the names of the plurality of receivers and the states of each of the respective receivers to indicate, based on completion information in the responses, whether the business activity has been completed, and wherein

the preparation unit prepares information representing a ratio of receivers having completed the business activity based on the completion information, which indicates respective completion states of the business activity of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, and prepares a message list containing, in a mutually associated manner, the information presenting the ratio of the receivers having completed the business activity and also containing a title of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities; and

the message management unit enables display of the message list and the receiver state list in the mutually associated manner on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the sender and the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising

a message preparation unit preparing the interpersonal message to be sent to the receivers by providing the interpersonal message with a confirmation button to be used by each of the receivers to inform the sender whether the assigned business activity has been completed, and

when the confirmation button is activated by one of the receivers, setting the information contained in the receiver state list to indicate that the activating receiver has completed the business activity.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 1, comprising:

a storage unit storing the content of the interpersonal message, receivers' names and completion information indicating whether the receivers have viewed the content of the interpersonal message or whether the receivers have completed business activities related to a content the interpersonal message, in an associated manner, wherein

the preparation unit prepares the receiver state list based on the receivers' names and the completion information.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 5, further comprising:

an amendment unit amending the contents of a transmitted interpersonal message stored in the storage unit; and

a recovery unit recovering all the receivers' open information indicating an open state to a not-opened state when the interpersonal message is amended by the amending unit.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 6, wherein:

the storage unit stores a plurality of comments prepared by the receivers in response to the interpersonal message; and

the recovery unit causes the comments stored in the storage unit to be stored without modification, when the transmitted message is amended by the amendment unit.

8. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 5, wherein:

the storage unit stores a message type of the interpersonal message, and

the preparation unit prepares the receiver state list according to the message type, the receivers' names and the completion information.

9. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 8, comprising:

a setting unit displaying comment alternatives of comment patterns which correspond to the message type of the received interpersonal message, in a comment section of the received interpersonal message, and setting a comment pattern which corresponds to a comment alternative selected by the receiver as the receiver's comment to the received interpersonal message, wherein

the storage unit includes a comment pattern storage portion for storing, corresponding to the message type, the comment patterns and the comment alternatives which correspond respectively to the comment patterns.

10. (CANCELLED)

11. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the message management unit provides a comment section for inputting a comment to the received interpersonal message and causes the comment inputted to the comment section to be displayed as the comment of a corresponding receiver, in the receiver state list.

12. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the message management unit causes a delay state for a response time limit that is set in the interpersonal message to be displayed as delay information in a received message list.

13. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising:

an open ratio obtaining unit obtaining an open ratio associated with the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, based on the individual states of the respective receivers, wherein

the message management unit enables display of a message list presenting the open ratio in association with a title of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the sender and the plurality of receivers.

14. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message processing apparatus according to claim 2, further comprising:

a completion ratio obtaining unit obtaining a completion ratio based on the completion information indicating the individual states of the respective receivers on the assigned business activity, wherein

the message management unit enables display of a message list presenting the open ratio in association with a title of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the sender and the plurality of the receivers.

15. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A message processing apparatus connected to a plurality of terminal apparatuses via a network, comprising:

a preparation unit preparing a receiver state list containing names of a plurality of receivers, each receiver having received an interpersonal message relating to a business activity, the receiver state list also containing individual states of each of the respective receivers, each individual state being mutually associated with the name of a corresponding receiver, where each individual state of each receiver indicates a status of that receiver's activity regarding the business activity, and where the indicating is based on responses received from the receivers in response to the interpersonal message;

a message management unit enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message relating to the business activity and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to a sender and the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity;

a detection unit automatically detecting designated keywords from comments submitted by a receiver of the interpersonal message in response to the interpersonal message; and

a counter unit counting a number of comments which include the keywords detected by the detection unit, wherein

the message management unit causes the number of comments including the designated keywords to be displayed on a terminal.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A message processing apparatus for processing a plurality of interpersonal messages transmitted from a plurality of terminal apparatuses, the message processing apparatus comprising:

a preparation unit, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of persons interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of persons who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, preparing a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers containing names of a plurality of receivers each having received an interpersonal message jointly addressed to the receivers, where the interpersonal message relates to a business activity, and where each name is associated with a

~~piece of information indicating a state of the respective receiver with respect to the business activity for which the receiver is responsible, each piece of information being based on a response by each of the receivers of the interpersonal message, where the responses are capable of being made in an arbitrary order with respect to each other; and~~

~~a message management unit enabling display of the interpersonal message in mutual association with and the receiver state list, where the displaying is enabled on a terminal apparatus belonging to the manager who is a sender and is enabled on the terminal apparatuses of the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, and where for each receiver the displaying is responsive to the interpersonal message being selected from a received message list comprising interpersonal messages sent to and received by the receiver.~~

17. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A message management method for managing a plurality of interpersonal messages transmitted from a plurality of terminal apparatuses, the message management method comprising:

~~preparing, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of persons interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of persons who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers containing names of a plurality of receivers, each receiver having received an interpersonal message jointly addressed to the receivers and relating to a business activity, the receiver state list also containing individual states of each of the respective receivers, each individual state being mutually associated with the name of a corresponding receiver, where each individual state of each receiver indicates a status of that receiver's activity regarding the business activity for which the receiver is responsible, and where the indicating is based on responses received from the receivers in response to the interpersonal message, where the responses capable of being made in an arbitrary order with respect to each other; and~~

~~enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message relating to the business activity and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the manager who is a sender of the interpersonal message and belonging to the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the~~

~~business activity, and where for each receiver the displaying is responsive to the interpersonal message being selected from a received message list comprising interpersonal messages sent to and received by the receiver.~~

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A message management method for use by a server apparatus connected via a network to a plurality of terminal apparatuses, comprising:

~~preparing, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of persons interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of persons who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers containing names of a plurality of receivers each having received an interpersonal message addressed to the receivers, where the interpersonal message relates to a business activity for which the receiver is responsible, where each name is mutually associated with a state of its respective receiver, and where each such state is based on a response to the interpersonal message from the state's receiver; and~~

~~enabling display of the interpersonal message in association with the receiver state list, where the displaying is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the manager who is a sender of the interpersonal message and the terminal apparatuses of belonging to the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities, where for each receiver the displaying is responsive to the interpersonal message being selected from a received message list comprising interpersonal messages sent to and received by the receiver.~~

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message management method according to claim 18, comprising displaying the receiver state list in a manner associated with the interpersonal message.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message management method according to claim 18, comprising:

displaying the receiver state list in a manner associated with the interpersonal message, wherein, the receiver state list includes receivers' names and completion information indicating whether receivers of the interpersonal message have viewed the interpersonal

message or whether the receivers of the interpersonal message have completed business activities related to a content of the interpersonal message.

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The message management method according to claim 18, wherein

when a manager managing the business activity sends the interpersonal message to respective staff inquiring about progress states concerning the business activity, and receives response messages from the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message inquiring about respective progress states concerning the assigned business activities, preparing the receiver state list containing, in the mutually associated manner, the names of the plurality of receivers and pieces of completion information based upon which the states of the respective receivers indicate whether the receivers have individually completed the business activity.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A message management method for use by a server apparatus connected via a network to a plurality of terminal apparatuses, comprising:

preparing a receiver state list containing names of a plurality of receivers each having received an interpersonal message addressed to the receivers, where the interpersonal message relates to a business activity, where each name is mutually associated with a state of its respective receiver, and where each such state is based on a response to the interpersonal message from the state's receiver;

enabling display of the interpersonal message in association with the receiver state list, where the displaying is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to a sender of and the terminal apparatuses of the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities;

preparing information presenting the ratio of the receivers having completed the assigned business activities based on the completion information indicating the completion states of the business activities respectively assigned to the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities, and preparing a message list containing, in a mutually associated manner, the information presenting the ratio of the receivers having completed the assigned business activities and a title of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities; and

enabling display of the message list in mutual association with the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the sender and

the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities.

23. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer readable storage medium storing a program, the program comprising:

~~preparing, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of persons interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of persons who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers containing names of a plurality of receivers, each receiver having received an interpersonal message relating to a business activity, the receiver state list also containing individual states of each of the respective receivers, each individual state being mutually associated with the name of a corresponding receiver, where each individual state of each receiver indicates a status of that receiver's activity regarding the business activity for which the receiver is responsible, and where the indicating is based on responses received from the receivers in response to the interpersonal message; and~~

~~enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message relating to the business activity and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the manager who is a sender of the interpersonal message and belonging to the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, and where for each receiver the displaying is responsive to the interpersonal message being selected from a received message list comprising interpersonal messages sent to and received by the receiver.~~

24. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer readable storage medium storing the program according to claim 23, wherein, the program enables display of the receiver state list which includes names of the receivers of the interpersonal message and completion information indicating whether the receivers of the interpersonal messages have viewed the interpersonal messages or completed business activities related to the contents of the interpersonal messages, on the terminal apparatus.

25. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer readable storage medium storing the program according to claim 23, wherein,

when a manager managing the business activity sends the interpersonal message to respective staff inquiring about progress states concerning the business activity, and receives response messages from the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message inquiring about respective progress states concerning the assigned business activities, preparing the receiver state list containing the names of the plurality of receivers in mutual association with the states of the respective receivers based on the responses indicating whether the receivers have individually completed the business activity.

26. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A computer readable storage medium storing a program, the program comprising:

preparing a receiver state list containing names of a plurality of receivers, each receiver having received an interpersonal message relating to a business activity, the receiver state list also containing individual states of each of the respective receivers, each individual state being mutually associated with the name of a corresponding receiver, where each individual state of each receiver indicates a status of that receiver's activity regarding the business activity, and where the indicating is based on responses received from the receivers in response to the interpersonal message;

enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message relating to the business activity and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to a sender and the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity;

preparing information presenting the ratio of the receivers having completed the assigned business activities based on the completion information indicating the completion states of the business activities respectively assigned to the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities, and preparing a message list containing, in a mutually associated manner, the information presenting the ratio of the receivers having completed the assigned business activities and a title of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities; and

enabling display of the message list in mutual association with the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the sender and the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activities.

27. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The computer readable storage medium storing a program according to claim 23, wherein the program further comprises:

recovering open information for all the receivers of the interpersonal message indicating an open state to a not-opened state when a content of the transmitted interpersonal message is amended by a sender, wherein

the receiver state list includes open information indicating whether the receivers have opened the interpersonal message.

28. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A method of providing e-mail information, comprising:
allowing a manager managing business activities uses sends to a plurality of recipients interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and to receive response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of recipients who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers;

based on interactive input generated by the recipients of an e-mail message when viewing the e-mail message, storing states of the recipients, where a stored state indicates a degree to which whether a recipient has completed an activity discussed in the e-mail message received by the recipients, and where the interactive input is inputted using interactive content displayed with the e-mail message; and

allowing the recipients and the manager who sent of the e-mail message to view a list of the stored states of the recipients of the e-mail message by, for each recipient, displaying the stored states responsive to the e-mail message being selected from a list comprising e-mail messages sent to and received by the respective recipient.

29. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A method according to claim 29, wherein the state of activity reflects a recipient's determination that the recipient has completed the activity.

30. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A message processing apparatus for processing a plurality of interpersonal messages transmitted from a plurality of terminal apparatuses, the message processing apparatus comprising:

a preparation unit, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of receivers interpersonal messages inquiring about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of receivers of these interpersonal messages, preparing a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers containing names of a plurality of receivers each having received an interpersonal message jointly addressed to the receivers, where the interpersonal message relates to a business activity, and where each name is associated with a piece of information indicating a state of the respective receiver with respect completion of the business activity for which the receiver is responsible, each piece of information being based on a response by each of the receivers of the interpersonal message, where the responses are capable of being made in an arbitrary order with respect to each other, where, the sender comprises a manager managing the business activity, where the receivers comprise respective staff, and the interpersonal message is a message inquiring about progress of the staff concerning the business activity, and the manager receives the response messages from the staff, where the responses include completion information indicating whether the business activity has been completed, and where the preparation unit prepares the receiver state list containing, in the mutually associated manner, the names of the plurality of receivers and the states of each of the respective receivers to indicate, based on completion information in the responses, whether the business activity has been completed; and

a message management unit enabling display of the interpersonal message in mutual association with and the receiver state list, where the displaying is enabled on a terminal apparatus belonging to a sender and is enabled on the terminal apparatuses of the manager and of the plurality of receivers of the interpersonal message relating to the business activity, and where for each receiver the displaying is responsive to the interpersonal message being selected from a received message list comprising interpersonal messages sent to and received by the receiver.

31. (NEW) A message processing apparatus connected to a plurality of terminal apparatuses via a network, comprising:

a preparation unit, when a manager managing business activities uses the message processing apparatus for sending to a plurality of persons interpersonal messages inquiring

about progress statuses concerning respectively assigned business activities and receiving response messages each including at least a completion state indicating whether the assigned activity has been completed from the plurality of persons who are receivers of these interpersonal messages, preparing a receiver state list that associates names and the completion states of the plurality of receivers; and

a message management unit enabling display of, in a mutually associated manner, the interpersonal message and the receiver state list, where the display is enabled on each of the terminal apparatuses belonging to the manager who is a sender of the interpersonal message and belonging to the plurality of the receivers of the interpersonal message; and

the message processing apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the message management unit provides a comment section for inputting a comment to the received interpersonal message and causes the comment inputted to the comment section to be displayed as the comment of a corresponding receiver, in the receiver state list.